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SUBJECT: CODEL WOLF: INTERFAITH DIALOGUE IN JERUSALEM; NEED FOR KUWAITI AMBASSADOR TO BAGHDAD

Classified By: CDA Misenheimer for reasons 1.4 b and d

Summary

¶1. (C) On January 4, Kuwaiti Islamist Mubarak Al-Mutawa told CODEL Wolf that Hamas would put an end to violence and recognize Israel, if it was convinced that Palestinian sovereignty was truly an option. He also praised the CODEL for promoting interfaith dialogue as a key to peace and stability in Israel, but questioned whether Muslim participants involved in the dialogue had spiritual authority over Palestinian Muslims. In a separate meeting at Kuwait's Humanitarian Operations Center, Congressman Wolf strongly stressed the need for Kuwaiti Ambassador-designate Ali Al-Mu'min to be in Baghdad. End Summary.

Meeting with Islamist Mubarak Al-Mutawa

¶2. (C) On January 4, Congressmen Frank Wolf (R-VA) and Joseph Pitts (R-PA) visited Kuwait en route to Israel, where they planned on engaging in interfaith dialogue to promote peace and stability between the Palestinians and Israelis. Based on their request to meet Muslims in Kuwait who are interested in promoting such dialogue, Post arranged a meeting with Islamist Mubarak Saadoun Al-Mutawa. The congressmen stressed the need for Hamas to renounce all violence and terror and to recognize Israel's right to exist. Mutawa said that Hamas is ready to move ahead and would renounce violence and even acknowledge Israel's right to exist, but questioned what the Palestinians would get in return. The congressmen replied, "sovereignty," a response that was met with incredulity by Mutawa. Mutawa hinted, though, that if Hamas could be convinced that real sovereignty was possible for Palestinians, it may lay down its violent agenda and renounce its destructive aims towards Israel.

¶3. (C) Mutawa showed great interest in the Congressmen's upcoming interfaith dialogue mission in Jerusalem. He was pleased to learn that five scholars from each of the three Abrahamic faiths would meet to discuss peace. He was skeptical, however, that the five Muslim participants (unnamed) in the dialogue would accurately represent the interests and faith of the Palestinians.

Baghdad needs a Kuwaiti Ambassador

¶4. (C) The CODEL also met with MG (retired) and Ambassador-designate to Baghdad, Ali Al-Mu'min, head of the Humanitarian Operations Center (HOC) in Kuwait, to learn of humanitarian assistance to Iraq. In the course of the

discussion on how the HOC coordinates NGO support and sends aid across the border to Iraq, Congressman Wolf strongly stressed the need for Mou'min to be in Baghdad as the Kuwaiti Ambassador. Mou'min responded that he was informed of this appointment three years ago, but that the GOK had yet to send him.

Bio Note: Mutawa

¶5. (C) Mutawa is known to Post as an Islamist, advisor to the National Assembly, and a lawyer with a focus on human rights. He has defended in court a number of defendants accused of Islamist-backed terrorism and incitement and promotes himself as authorized to conduct negotiations between Hamas and the United States.

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